Food Security for Increasing Population in Country

2173. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finalised its plan for food security in the context of increasing population in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to achieve food security within the existing paradigm of globalisation and liberalisation?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) An appropriate policy on Food Security in the Country is already under operation. The present policy provides for minimum support prices to the farmers for their produce; procurement by the public agencies of wheat, paddy and coarse grains offered at the minimum support prices; rice as levy at fixed rates; and supply of adequate foodgrains to the States/UTs for distribution through the public distribution system. The policy also envisages maintenance of minimum buffer stocks of rice and wheat in the country on different dates in a year.

(c) EXIM Policy on foodgrains is decided having regard to production, availability and stock position of foodgrains with the Government, in such a way that export of foodgrains does not adversely affect food security of the country.

Widening cap Between Exports and Imports

2174. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been widening of gap between exports and imports;

(b) if so, the trade deficit during 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96;

(c) the factors responsible for increase in trade deficit; and

(d) the steps taken to narrow this widening gap between exports and imports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) As per the available DGCI&S data the trade deficit (the gap between imports & exports) during 1993-94, 1994-95 and 1995-96 (Prev.) are placed at US$ 1069 million, US$ 2324 million and US$ 4539 million respectively;

(c) Trade deficit accure when the value of imports are higher than experts. The present trade gap is mainly due to higher imports of essential commodities like petroleum, items of mass consumption like edible oil and higher imports of capital goods, raw material and intermediate goods required for accelerated industrial production and exports.

(d) The key to reducing trade deficit lies in accelerated expert growth. Export promotion measures are continuously being taken by the Government through policy and promotional schemes. These include simplification of Export Import Policy procedures, improving efficiency and competitiveness, focussing on quality and technology upgradation, efforts to actively involve the State Governments in export promotion. Export promotion is a continuing activity based on interaction with industry, trade and other export promotional institutions.

New Aluminium Projects in Orissa

2175. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new Alumina projects being established in Orissa;

(b) whether the process is getting delayed due to pendency of applications